

Saga Guitar

This unique project was born out of the Saga Grant which was provided by the Lily Foundation and awarded to Georgetown College in 2024. Tasked with making a public sculpture that would retell the history of the college, I looked not only back on our past but also forward to where we wanted to go. Whatever I fashioned would need to be something that students, faculty, staff, alumni and visitors alike could relate to, reflect on, and learn from. Rather than create work that eventually would blend into the landscape of campus I chose to make something with which one could interact. There are many people associated with Georgetown College that play guitar, so it became my goal to create one that can allow them to physically interact with the history of the campus while expressing themselves through music. Not only will someone who can play guitar be able to experience the richness of our history through that method, but anyone who wishes to purvey the symbols inlaid in this instrument and read the stories that compose their foundation can as well. My hope is that it will inspire anyone with Georgetown College in their personal story, and that its sound will flood our halls with both the resilient spirit of our past and the assured victories to come in the future.

Woods Used:

The majority of the woods used to make this guitar were harvested from the Georgetown College campus. Therefore, the sounds that come from this guitar serve as an audio portrait of this very special place. I have been collecting the woods since I came to Georgetown in 2006 with the thought that one day I may make something that represents Georgetown College.

- The cherry for the sides of the guitar are made from old book shelving from the LRC.
- The cherry used in the neck came from a branch of a cherry tree near Knight Hall.
- The walnut used on the back of the guitar is from a walnut tree that came down in a storm on Hollyhock Lane near the Student Wellness Center.
- The maple used in the fingerboard inlay came from a tree taken down by the Admissions office.
- The GC inlay in the headstock of the guitar came from a pear tree taken down at the entrance to south campus across the street from the John Hill Chapel.

Fingerboard Inlay:

The imagery used in the fingerboard of this guitar is a retelling of the college's history. Each flower (or sets of flowers) that serve as fret markers for the player also represent specific milestones in the history of Georgetown College.

From bottom to top the narrative is as followed:

- Founding in 1829
 - The forget me not is a flower that thrives in harsh conditions and speaks to hope. It is a beautiful flower that represents survival. It is a hardy plant that can withstand harsh weather conditions, such as heat and drought, making it a symbol of resilience and strength.
- Survival of the Civil War
 - Two flowers are used. One is the corn poppy and the other is the sweet pea, which represent both division and coming together. Corn poppies were used used to make a tea treating injured or traumatized soldiers. The sweet pea flower has two separate colors and has been used to foster relationships. It is a symbol of togetherness.
- Connection to the Kentucky Baptists in 1942
 - Almond blossoms were used as an image of a partnership that also maintained ones identity. This tree is often used for grafting- using the base of one existing tree to add the attributes of another into its branches.
- The Decision in 1959 by the trustees to keep GC in Georgetown vs Louisville
 - *Campanula portenschlagiana* (the wall bellflower) is one that is vigorous and slow growing. It can live in cracks and is a mound forming evergreen. It is a perennial that likes small spaces.
- The expansion of the college housing and campus under president Mills
 - The periwinkle is a flower that spreads and covers ground.
- Separation from Kentucky Baptist Convention in 2005
 - The morning glory is a flower that is associated with change due to its unique characteristic of blooming in the morning and withering away by the afternoon. This process of blooming and fading symbolizes the ephemeral nature of life and reminds us that everything in life is temporary and subject to change. In addition, morning glory is often associated with new beginnings and renewal, making it a symbol of change and growth. The flower's ability to thrive in a variety of conditions, including poor soil and hot temperatures, represents the resilience and adaptability needed to navigate change.
- Dr Greene Stabilization 2014

- Fireweed is a flower that is consistent, humble, and gentle. It grows after wildfires.
- Dr Allen as haven and pivot to the future 2022
 - The calla lily, known for its elegance and grace, reminds us that nature will be reborn, and life will continue, even in the darkest, harshest winter. This exquisite bloom has captured the hearts of many. In addition to representing purity, calla lilies are also associated with rebirth and resurrection. This symbolism stems from the fact that the flower goes dormant during the winter months and re-emerges in the spring, blooming once again. The calla lily flower meaning is associated with various significant traits such as transformation, change, personal growth, inner strength, and courage to embrace new beginnings. This symbolism is derived from the way the flower emerges from a bulb and unfurls into a graceful bloom. It represents the journey of life and the various stages of growth and transformation that one experiences along the way. It is a flower that thrives in harsh conditions and signifies hope.